

CLAIMS

What we claim is:

1. A process for the simultaneous coproduction of ethyl acetate and isopropyl acetate, comprising reacting an alcohol mixture of ethanol and isopropanol with acetic acid, in the liquid phase, in the presence of an acidic catalyst wherein the reaction is carried out at elevated temperature and at a pressure sufficient to effect esterification of the reactants.
2. The process of claim 1 wherein the alcohol mixture is derived from the purification of a Fischer Tropsch alcohol mixture.
3. The process of claim 2 wherein the Fischer Tropsch derived alcohol mixture is purified, prior to use, employing distillation.
4. The process of claim 2 wherein the Fischer Tropsch derived alcohol mixture is purified, prior to use, employing extractive distillation with water.
5. The process of claim 1 wherein a Fischer Tropsch alcohol mixture is employed and the mixture is not purified prior to use.
6. The process of claim 5 wherein high boiling ester byproducts are produced during the reaction and removed from the reaction product during the purification process of the respective ethyl and isopropyl acetate products.
7. The process of claim 1 wherein the alcohol mixture contains between about 90% ethanol : 10% isopropanol to between about 10% ethanol : 90% isopropanol.
8. The process of claim 7 wherein the mixture is between about 80% ethanol : 20% isopropanol to between about 60% ethanol : 40% isopropanol.
9. The process of claim 1 wherein each of ethyl acetate and isopropyl acetate is recovered at greater than about 99.5% purity.
10. The process of claim 9 wherein the acetates are recovered at a purity of about or greater than 99.7%.